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HISTORY

Of

MARY BRANAN MEMORIAL METHODIST CHURCH

HISTORICAL SKETCH OF MARY BRANAN MEMORIAL METHODIST CHURCH in SYLVAN HILLS.

The present Mary Branan Memorial Methodist Church in Sylvan Hills is a shining example of what "Unity of Purpose and Cooperation on a Christian Basis" can do if the Congregation will allow the Lord to be the Builder and the people be the helpers in such a project.

The ground breaking in 1947, for the present basement structure, was under the supervision of Rev. W. L. Brackman, the pastor at that time, Dr. J. W. Veatch, Superintendent of the Atlanta-East District, Mrs. N. G. Baggett, Charter member of the Sylvan Hills Methodist Church and Colonel E. E. Wilson, Chairman of the Building Committee. Today, five years later, the basement auditorium and one wing of the Sunday School plant has grown to the complete basement with two large fellowship classrooms added in the sub-basement, a kitchen completely furnished, a nursery, Pastor's study, and Youth fellowship wing furnished. The permanent heating, lighting, and off the street parking areas have been installed. The Organ has been paid for and many other permanent improvements have been added by means of the whole-hearted cooperation of the entire congregation.

The Church has a most interesting historical background. The former Sylvan Hills Methodist Church was organized on April 17, 1932, at the home of Mrs. J. E. Bishop, on Langston Avenue, S.W. in Atlanta, during the Presiding Eldership of Dr. R. L. Russell. There were 35 charter members, but this number was increased before the end of the first year to 85, under the leadership of Jack Nichols, the first pastor. The log cabin building on Deckner Avenue, S.W. was chosen by the congregation as the place of worship. The Church grew in numbers and Christian strength through the years under the guidance of the following pastors: Jack Nichols, H. E. McBrayer, C. L. Allen, D. H. Maxey, Joe E. Crawley, B. L. Helm, G. W. Hamilton, J. V. Jones, and M. L. Warwick.

In 1940 the merger of the three branches of Methodism brought the membership of the Protestant Methodist Church, located on Evans Drive into the Sylvan Hills Methodist Church.

In 1944 the Mary Branan Memorial Church, which had been organized more than eighty years ago, as Evans Chapel, united with the Sylvan Hills Methodist Church, and the name was changed to Mary Branan Memorial Methodist Church in Sylvan Hills.

The Mary Branan Memorial Methodist Church brought a rich heritage of historical background some of which is as follows: Sixty years ago the Church then known as Evans Chapel was moved from the corner of Chappell Street, to a new brick building at the junction of Walker Street and Nelson Street, and the name was changed to Walker Street Methodist Church. Some of the pastors who served this church were: J. H. Eakes, J. R. King, B. F. Fraser, W. T. Hamby and W. C. Mackey, (brother of E. G. Mackey). Several years later, this building was sold and the congregation moved to a temporary location at the corner of Stonewall and Walker Streets. In a few years this building was also sold, and the church then moved into a beautiful brick building on the corner of Whitehall St. and Whitehall Terrace. The name was again changed to Mary Branan Memorial Methodist Church, in memory of the mother of the late Mr. C. I. Branan, who was a very active member until his death. After more than 25 years at this location the church was forced to move, due to encroaching business developments, and at this time they united with the Sylvan Hills Methodist Church, to become the present Mary Branan Memorial Methodist Church in Sylvan Hills.

Sheet #2 - Historical Sketch of Mary Branan Memorial Methodist Church continued.

Today this Church has a very active Sunday School, with a full corps of teachers, an excellent Choir, which holds regular practices under the direction of a splendid organist, Miss Sarah Brown, a Church Secretary, Mrs. E. M. Wagner, and Assistant Pastor, Mr. Bill Bohannon, and an able Pastor, Rev. T. M. Sullivan. Our Woman's Society of Christian Service has seven active circles. We have two Wesleyan Service Guilds, for the business and professional women of the Church. The Church sponsors regular meetings of the Youth Fellowship, Boy Scounts, Cub Scouts, and World Friendship Group. Recently our Junior Church was re-organized under the leadership of Bill Bohannon and it meets regularly in conjunction with the regular Sunday Morning Worship Service. The W.S.C.S. and the W.S. Guilds provide Nursery Services for the Church during the regular Sunday Morning Worship Service. They also cook and serve bi-weekly "Family Night" Suppers (at the cost of the meal) at which wonderful fellowship among the members and families is cemented. Each year a very large Daily Vacation Bible School is conducted by the women of the Church. The Stewards have an active "Fisherman's Club" which is participated in by most members of the Official Board.

The Finance Committee, with Mr. E. M. McGee, Chairman and the church membership as a whole are uniting to raise the necessary funds to complete the structure as soon as possible. When completed it will be one of the finest and most substantial structures in the city, as it is made of Stone Mountain Granite. Pastors who have inspired us in the completion of this much of our structure were; W. L. Brackman, and Earl Strickland.

This record proves that our church is a growing church in the heart of a rapidly expanding community. We feel that we deserve our motto "A Friendly Church," and that we are growing Spiritually as well as materially under the leadership of our present pastor, Rev. T. M. Sullivan.

1869 Evans Chapel was organized by Rev Clement A. Evans pastor of Trinity Methodist Church
1891 Evans Chapel was moved to Walker St and became known as Walker Street Methodist Church.
1918 Walker Street Methodist was moved to Whitehall St and the name was changed to Mary Branan Memorial Methodist Church.
1932 The Sylvan Hills Methodist Church was organized by Dr. R. L. Russell Rev Jack Nichols served as student pastor until November when Rev. H. E. McBrayer was appointed pastor.
1944 Mary Branan Memorial and Sylvan Hills united as Mary Branan Memorial Methodist Church in Sylvan Hills with Rev. M. L. Warlick pastor.
1947 The Church built and occupied the basement located at 1776 Sylvan Rd SW with Rev. W. L. Brackman pastor.
1954 Dedication of the Basement by Bishop Arthur Moore, Rev. T. M. Sullivan pastor.
1955 Church Auditorium built and occupied Rev. Lee Branham pastor.

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